

Ormond Plantation
St. Rose P. O., 2 miles from Destrehan
Louisiana

St. Charles Parish

HABS No. 18-13

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District No. 18

Historic American Buildings Survey
Richard Koch, District Officer
614 Audubon Building, New Orleans, Louisiana

ORMOND PLANTATION (Residence)
(St. Rose P. O.) St. Charles Parish Louisiana
DESTREHAN VICINITY

Owner:

Inter-Credit Corporation
Maritime Building, New Orleans

Date of Erection:

Main House - approximately 1803;
Wings added between 1811 and 1819

Architect:

Unknown

Builder:

Unknown

Present Condition:

Very bad. Due to neglect during the past
twenty years it is rapidly falling into
decay.

Number of Stories:

Two

Materials of Construction:

Two-story central portion brick,
half-timbered. Brick columns on first
floor; wood columns second floor. Cypress
shingle hipped roof. Two detached wings,
two-story, brick walls cemented on second
floor.

Other existing Records:

Old Louisiana - Lyle Saxon; Century Company, 1929
Norman's Chart of the Lower Mississippi River;
A. Persac, 1858
Chain of Title, attached

Additional Data:

The plantation house at Ormond is situated on the
left bank of the Mississippi River just above Destrehan,
in St. Charles Parish. The house is said to have been built
by Richard Butler, a member of a prominent family of American

Army people who came to Louisiana from Carlisle, Pennsylvania, at the time of the transfer in 1803. Col. Thomas Butler was in command of the American troops who took possession of the colony at that time. He died of yellow fever in 1805. Another member of the family, a cousin of Richard Butler, was a general during the Mexican War.

When Richard Butler acquired the property from the Widow Charbonnette (Antoinette Livaudais) on May 29, 1811, there was included in the sale a residence, sugar house, etc. This indicates that perhaps part of the middle house was there and that the wings were added or even the "main house" enlarged by the addition of the enclosed stair.

Butler's title to the property was confirmed by the U. S. Government as recorded as follows in the "LAND CLAIMS IN ORLEANS TERRITORY", Page 329, No. 279:

"Richard Butler claims a tract of land, situate in the country of the German Coast, on the left bank of the Mississippi, containing eighteen (18) arpents in front, by the ordinary depth of forty, bounded by the lands of . . . on the upper side and by those of . . . on the lower side. It appears that said land was inhabited and cultivated on the 20th of December, 1803, and for more than ten consecutive years prior to that period. Confirmed."

The property was acquired from Richard Butler in 1819 by Samuel McCutcheon, a former ship captain with whom Butler was in partnership in the ownership of a large adjoining tract. McCutcheon also acquired the land on the

south from Jean Elenore Arnauld in 1826. McCutcheon evidently married a member of the Butler family as the name "Butler" was continued for several generations in his family. The use of the name "Ormond" has also been continued by the Butler family to the present day.

According to an old survey, a copy of which is on file among the township plats in the Federal Land Bank, only the land close to the river was fit for cultivation of sugar cane. The rest of the large tract was nothing but cypress and willow swamps and open marsh along Lake Pontchartrain.

The house, now in a sad state of repair, faces the river and the Old River Road, standing 300 feet back from the Levee. It presents a picturesque appearance, set flush with the ground and surrounded with gnarled oaks and magnolias. Its faded colors are most pleasing, the brick being of a warm red hue, the stucco painted yellow ochre.

Ormond is unusual for a plantation house in Louisiana, the scheme of the central portion flanked by two symmetrical detached wings, though of a later period, suggesting the influence of Virginia and the Atlantic Seaboard. The detail throughout is very good, delicate and fine in scale, and belongs to the tradition of the early houses of Natchez and the Felicianas.

Materials and method of construction used in the main body of the house are very interesting, being of a type familiar in many smaller buildings in Louisiana and

known as BRIQUETTES ENTRE ^POTEAUX (brick between posts), a sort of half-timber construction. The front wall is framed with five-inch square rough studs, the interstices being filled with brick. The end walls are similarly framed but an adobe filling is used in place of the brick. All other walls are ordinary frame construction with the exception of an eight-inch brick partition across the center of the first floor.

There is a two-story gallery across the entire front of the house, with round cemented brick columns on the first floor and chamfered square wood columns on the second. The house, including the gallery, is roofed with a low pitched hipped roof covered with split cypress shingles.

The columns on both floors as well as the stiles and rails of doors and shutters are painted a burnt sienna color. Beams and girders are painted ochre to match the walls, while the panels of doors and shutters are dark buff. The brick work is painted dark red.

The floor of the gallery on the first floor is paved with eight-inch square stone tiles in checkerboard pattern, alternating light pink and slate color. The floor of the passages between the main house and the wings, the walk across the rear, and the now almost obliterated front walk are soft red brick.

The plan is quite simple, there being four principal rooms on each floor with a stair hall extending

from front to back at each end. The principal stair is at the east end rising from the center of the hall, in a double flight, to the second floor. There is a cove ceiling in the hall with a wood cornice, chair rail and base. All the rooms were originally plastered, although several have since been covered with boards. All rooms, except the stair hall and the rear room at the east end of the first floor have beaded wood ceilings. The attic is unfinished.

The wings are connected to the house by open galleries. Both are identical except for the detail of the mantels, which is particularly good. The walls are of brick, cemented on the second floor, and the hipped roofs are covered with cypress shingles. There is a brick chimney in the center of the ridge of each wing as well as of the main house. Each wing contains four rooms, two on each floor.

The water supply for the house was furnished from two subterranean cisterns, one at each end of the house, which were filled with rain water from the roof. These cisterns are of brick, cemented inside, circular in plan with a conical top which projects slightly above grade. There was originally a circular opening in the center of this top, like a brick well head projecting above the ground, into which the downspouts emptied and through which the water was drawn from the cisterns. This type of cistern is

quite common in Louisiana, although the circular wooden type, built above grade, is perhaps more often seen. There is a new one of this type at the rear of the house and also an old well.

Several of the outbuildings of the plantation, slave quarters, a jail and meat house stand in the field back of the house.

May 28, 1935

Samuel Wilson, Jr.

CHAIN OF TITLE

From Courthouse Records at Hahnville, Parish seat of St. Charles Parish

The Inter-Credit Corporation acquired this property from:
Louis Barthelemew Schexnaydre
Alexandre Joseph "
Paul Norbert "
Andre " et als
Alexandre Joseph " " "
by act before Robert Legier, N.P., October 22, 1926. Paul Norbert Schexnaydre received the part on which the residence stands. Partition was made September 21, 1918.

Louis Barthelemew Schexnaydre
Alexandre "
Paul Norbert "
Andre Albert "
Emelieu "

acquired the property from Mrs. Eugene Sauvage, widow of Bazil La Place, Sr., November 30, 1900 by act before C. T. Soniat, N.P.

Mrs. Eugene Sauvage, widow of Bazil La Place, Sr., acquired by purchase from succession of her son Bazil La Place, Jr., January 27, 1900, thru Widow Mistress Clara Gesselly La Place, Jr., on February 26, 1900, as recorded by J. C. Triche, Clerk of the Court and ex-Notary Public.

Bazil La Place acquired from Joseph Clement Triche by sale on December 1, 1898, recorded by notary public Louis Orey.

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Joseph Clement Triche acquired from Charles E. Alter by sale on March 2, 1898, as recorded by Andrew Herv., Jr., Notary Public.

Charles E. Alter acquired from Henry Shepard by public sale recorded in Book "E", fol. 100, on October 5, 1875

Henry Shepard acquired by public sale, by State Tax Collector Morgan Morgans, February 3, 1874

Property defunct by W. H. Aymar and Mrs. Solidelle Le Gardeur, wife of Joseph Deynoodt, owners. Records in Book "D", fol. 482

William H. Symar acquired from Mrs. Jane Butler Browder, wife of Percival Butler McCutcheon (Mrs. P. B. McCutcheon) December 22, 1868, recorded by Theodore Guyol, N. P.

Mrs. P. B. McCutcheon acquired in lieu of debts from Samuel McCutcheon and James William McCutcheon, December 6, 1865, as recorded by George M. Christ, N.P.

This last transaction records the following:

"The herein described property was derived from the estate of their father, the late Samuel McCutcheon by the present vendors, and was by him acquired partly from Richard Butler by an act under private signature, dated the 26th of June, 1819, and recorded in the office of Savinieu Blanc on the 13th of June, 1821: and partly from Jean Elenore Arnould by an act passed before Marc Lafite, then a Notary Public in this city (New Orleans) on the 1st of April, 1826."

J. W. McCutcheon and Samuel McCutcheon from W. B. McCutcheon on May 19, 1852, recorded in Book "A", fol. 123

Jean Elenore Arnould acquired from Jean LaBranche by act before Antoine Despit St. Armant, October 18, 1797, recorded March 30, 1826, after transfer of the State of Louisiana in 1803

Richard Butler acquired from (Mistress Antoinette Lavau-dais) widow Charbonnette by sale May 29, 1811, quitance recorded June 16, 1814, by Lewis Floren Bazile, N.P.

May 28, 1935

Carl J. Helbak
Edward Bezou

Reviewed 1936 H.C. Foreman